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ADVENT

a season of preparation

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERIES: “COMING HOME”

CONTINUING THROUGH JANUARY 2, 9 AM IN THE SANCTUARY & ONLINE, 11 AM IN WESLEY HALL

The season of Advent marks the beginning of a new church year and focuses our attention on an invitation. For many, it is the invitation to get into the “Christmas spirit,” to count down the days until Christmas Day, and to fill our days with gift-wrapping, decorating, and Christmas music. But there is a deeper and more far-reaching invitation also being offered in the season of Advent: the invitation to remember and to act like we are heading home, toward God’s beloved community. Beloved community is the home where all are family, where peace resides and justice abides. Advent reminds us that we should not be complacent or satisfied about the way things are but, instead, anticipating and working toward God’s dream for this world—a beloved community, in which all can come home.

Join us in worship on Sundays at 9 AM (in the Sanctuary and online) and 11 AM (in Wesley Hall) throughout the seasons of Advent and Christmas (November 28 through January 2) as we long together for the coming beloved community—our truest home—where we will study war no more, where all people will be together in real fellowship, where joy will be found, and where love will be the tie that binds us together.

Join us—and invite family, friends, neighbors,
and co-workers to join us, too—as we “come home”
to God’s hope, peace, joy, and love.



ADVENT

a season of preparation

ADVENT STUDY

INCARNATION: REDISCOVERING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRISTMAS

WEDNESDAYS THROUGH DECEMBER 22, 7 PM, ROOM 13 *OR*
TUESDAYS THROUGH DECEMBER 21, 9:30 AM, ROOM 13 *OR*
SUNDAYS THROUGH DECEMBER 19, 10 AM, FELLOWSHIP HALL

All are welcome to join us for this four-week Bible study experience to help prepare us to celebrate God's presence with us in Christ during the upcoming Christmas season. In the midst of so much cultural uncertainty and conflict, we will reflect together on the significant of the Christ child who brings us together, heals our hearts, and calls us to bring light into the darkness.

For more information and to RSVP for either of these opportunities and receive the Zoom meeting id, please contact **Pastor Nathan** at nhowe@umcb.org or 440-234-3525 x100.

ADVENT WREATH

SUNDAYS OF ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS EVE

As we count down the Sundays leading up to Christmas, in worship we will light an additional candle each week on the Advent wreath. This is a great opportunity especially for families with children to participate in a tangible ritual, but of course, individuals, friends, or any other groupings are more than welcome, too!

For more information or to sign up to participate during either of our Sunday morning worship services (9 AM or 11 AM) on December 5, 12, or 19, please contact **Pastor Nathan** at nhowe@umcb.org or 440-234-3525 x101.



THE LONGEST NIGHT WORSHIP SERVICE
 TUESDAY, DECEMBER 21, 7 PM IN THE SANCTUARY AND ONLINE

The holiday season can be especially difficult for some of us, a painful reminder of what has been lost or of what has never been. All are welcome to join us on Tuesday, December 21 at 7 pm in the Sanctuary or online (www.facebook.com/umcberea/live) for a worship service of scripture, prayer, candlelight, and Holy Communion. Invite others, also, and join us as we re-affirm together our faith in God's presence with us, even in the darkest and loneliest seasons of our lives.

Friday, December 24, 2021 Christmas Eve		Saturday, December 25, 2021 Christmas Day	
<i>Isaiah 9.2-7</i>	<i>Titus 2.11-14</i>	<i>Isaiah 52.7-10</i>	<i>Hebrews 1.1-4 (5-12)</i>
<i>Psalms 96 (UMH 815)</i>	<i>Luke 2.1-20</i>	<i>Psalms 98 (UMH 818)</i>	<i>John 1.1-14</i>

CHRISTMAS

a celebration of God's presence

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICES
 FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24

Worship with us on Friday, December 24 for the Great Festival of the Incarnation, the celebration of God's presence with us in Jesus Christ. Opportunities will be provided to gather inside, outside, and online, so please join us—and invite others to join us, too—in whatever setting is most comfortable to you as we celebrate God's gift together. Each service will include beautiful music, a message of hope, and the traditional sharing of candlelight.

- 4 PM in the Sanctuary
- 7 PM in the Sanctuary and Online (www.facebook.com/umcberea/live)
- 8:30 PM on the Porch and Seminary Street yard and sidewalk
- (We will read the Christmas story, light candles, and join our voices to sing "Silent Night")
- 11 PM in the Sanctuary





CONNECTING , INVITING , & WELCOMING



COME AS YOU ARE PAGEANT
DECEMBER 19
11 AM WORSHIP SERVICE, WESLEY HALL

Help us share
the Good News of Christmas
by taking part in our
"Come as You Are" pageant
during the 11 AM worship service
on December 19.

Small props and easy costumes
will be provided as you enter.

We need all ages to participate!

No script or speaking parts, just play along with
the story interspersed with Christmas carols!



STOCKING STUFFER SWAP
MONDAY, DECEMBER 6
8 PM, FELLOWSHIP HALL

Partnering with Buy Nothing Berea, The UMCB
will host this fun event for parents of young
children, Monday, December 6 at 8 PM in
Fellowship Hall.

Participants may bring your small toys and
trinkets their kids no longer play with and swap
for new! Paired socks, mittens, etc. are also
great!

Hot cocoa and snacks provided - masking
required when not actively eating/drinking.

This is a great way for our church
to support young families and
create a more sustainable world.



**FIRST SUNDAY AFTER
CHRISTMAS DAY**
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26,
9 AM AND 11 AM WORSHIP SERVICES



During both morning worship services on Sunday, December 26, we will celebrate the Christmas season with Services of Lessons and Carols, reading scripture's story of salvation and singing favorite Christmas carols.



SUNDAY AFTERNOON WALK

DECEMBER 12, 3 PM, LAKE ISAAC

All are welcome to join us for a walk near Lake Isaac, part of the Big Creek Reservation, located just south of Fowles Road in Middleburg Heights. We will gather in the parking lot at Lake Isaac and, from there, have access to a 1.2-mile trail through the woods and the all-purpose trail that runs alongside Big Creek Parkway.

If you plan to join us, please RSVP by the end of the day on **Thursday, December 9** to **Pastor Nathan** at nhowe@umcb.org or **440-234-3525 x101**.



BLESSING OF HOMES

POST-EPIPHANY (JANUARY 6, 2022)

In some parts of the world, there is a Christian custom of inviting God's blessing on dwelling places, including both homes and workplaces, and upon all who live, work, or visit there. Along with prayers for God's blessing, the front or main entrance is marked with chalk as a sign and reminder that we have invited God's presence into our homes.



This tradition is rooted in the visit of the magi to the place where the Christ-child resided (Matthew 2.1-12), and so it is most appropriately practiced near or during the season after the Epiphany, on January 6.

If you would like to share in this brief and simple ritual of worship for your home, please contact **Pastor Nathan** (nhowe@umcb.org or **440-234-3525 x101**) with a day and time that would be convenient for you, beginning January 6, 2022.

CONNECTING, INVITING, & WELCOMING



CHURCH FAMILY PRAYER CONCERNS

MEMBERS

Bruce Akins	Elenore Long
Janet Angus	Christine McMillin
Molly Arthur	Betty Miller
Betty Atherton	Rev. Cal Myers
Barbara Beihl	Donna O'Brien
Heidi Blue	Mary Potts
Carol Bodle	Donald Powers
Barb Dawson	Lou Russell
Wilda Donegan	Russ Sanderson
Cleda Fletcher	Jo Swanson
Molly Force	Ron Teutsch
Carol & Bruce Forster	Carol Thompson
Carol Heskett	Kathleen Wargelin
Jan Heter	

FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Debbie and Augie (parents of Stacey Antczak)
Wanda Baulin (sister of Wilda Donegan)
Marc Bittinger
Mike Cline (son of Corky Cline)
Hayes Daggy & Parents (great grandson of Condit Dibble)
Susan Davidson (sister of Robert Haas)
David Dawley (8/16/21, Nephew of Ron & Dorene Larkey)
Amy Marie Dziak (daughter of Marlynda Dziak)
Anthony Echols (grandson of Georgiann Baesel)
Spencer Gehring
Sylvie Isgro-Schicker
Joan Mraz (friend of Nancy Schillace)
Jeremy Piper
Chet Talarczyk (husband of Judy Talarczyk)

WE REACH OUT IN

CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY AND LOVE...

... to the family and friends of Allan Carlson, who went on to rest in God's eternal peace on November 5.

MEMBERS AT HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

Shirley Bedford (Independence Village)
Ann Benson (Western Reserve-Medina)
Jack Irely (Renaissance)
Janice Kavander
Mary Lou McKissock (Kemper House, Strongsville)
Pat Sarka (Wesleyan Village, Elyria)
Barbara Scoon (Generations)
Von & Marilyn Smith (Southwest Commons)
Ruth Vrana (Generations, Strongsville)
Eva Williamson (Western Reserve-Medina)

MILITARY

J.D. Ferut (grandson of Gerry & Jo Boggs)
Ryan Hopkins
Bill Lambert (son-in-law of Corky Cline)
Josh Lambert (grandson of Corky Cline)
Ben Lebrun
Zachary New (grandson of Bob & Jackie King)



PASTORAL CARE & PRAYER REQUESTS

Please contact **Pastor Nathan** at **440-234-3525 x101** or nhowe@umcb.org if you would like to schedule an individual time to talk or if you have a specific prayer request.

You can also submit prayer requests on our website at www.umcb.org/worshipresources.

To receive Prayer Concerns by email, visit our website at www.umcb.org and subscribe on the front page (bottom of the right column).

CONNECTING, INVITING, & WELCOMING

<p style="text-align: center;">Sunday, December 5, 2021</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Second Sunday of Advent</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Malachi 3.1-4</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Luke 1.68-79 (UMH 208)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Philippians 1.3-11</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Luke 3.1-6</i></p>	<p><i>For Reflection and Conversation:</i></p> <p>The prophet Malachi says that God is “like a refiner’s fire and like fuller’s soap”. Reflect on events of the past year. How might God’s grace be working through those events to refine your life? Paul writes to the church at Philippi, “I thank my God every time I remember you....” Think about those in your life for whom you are grateful and consider writing a note or card to express your gratitude.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Sunday, December 12, 2021</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Third Sunday of Advent</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Zephaniah 3.14-20</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Isaiah 12.2-6</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Philippians 4.4-7</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Luke 3.7-18</i></p>	<p><i>For Reflection and Conversation:</i></p> <p>Imagine being in the crowd listening to John the baptizer. How might John be instructing you to prepare for the coming of God’s beloved community? John invites us to prepare by sharing. How do you feel about sharing? How are you practicing sharing?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Sunday, December 19, 2021</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Fourth Sunday of Advent</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Micah 5.2-5a</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Luke 1.47-55 (UMH 199)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Hebrews 10.5-10</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Luke 1.39-45</i></p>	<p><i>For Reflection and Conversation:</i></p> <p>Where do you notice the light of Christ magnified in your person, your life, and the ways of your family and community? Make a point to notice in the coming week one time each day when the light of Christ is made present for you by another person.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Sunday, December 26, 2021</p> <p style="text-align: center;">First Sunday after Christmas</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>1 Samuel 2.18-20, 26</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Psalms 148 (UMH 861)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Colossians 3.12-17</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Luke 2.41-52</i></p>	<p><i>For Reflection and Conversation:</i></p> <p>Consider Jesus as an adolescent, causing his parents to worry about him. Jesus asks them, “Why were you searching for me?” If you were a parent of Jesus, how would you answer that question? How do you answer that question for yourself? In what ways are you searching for Jesus right now?</p>

Morning Prayer (week of Sunday, December 5):

Blessed are you, Lord God.
By your tender mercy, the dawn breaks upon us.
Guide our feet this day in your paths of peace,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Prayer (week of Sunday, December 5):

Blessed are you, Lord God,
for you have smiled on us this day
and redeemed us from sin:
from all that separates us
from you and from each other.
Give light to all who wait in darkness
until we rest with you in perfect peace. Amen.

Morning Prayer (week of Sunday, December 12):

God, surely you are my salvation.
I begin this day without fear, trusting you,
for you are my strength.
Help me to meditate all day on the thought
that you are rejoicing in me.
Keep me aware of your presence in others,
and bring me home to you at the close of the day.
Amen.

Evening Prayer (week of Sunday, December 12):

Thank you, God, for the gift of today
and for guarding my heart and mind
in Christ Jesus.
All that I did and left undone,
I now give over to your safekeeping,
trusting in your peace that passes understanding.
Be my rest as I sleep tonight,
and renew me in your love. Amen.

Morning Prayer (week of Sunday, December 19):

Thank you, good and gracious God,
for the morning light,
for another day in which to live out
what it means that you have magnified my soul.
Teach me the meaning of "Let it be."
Show me how to trust; in Jesus' name, Amen.

Evening Prayer (week of Sunday, December 19):

Good and gracious God,
we give you thanks
that you have made incarnate in your world
the breath of life, the life of hope.
Keep us safe throughout the night
that in the morning we may again rejoice
and live in peace with all creation. Amen.

Morning Prayer (week of Sunday, December 26):

Lord Jesus, as you listen to your teachers,
may I also, this day, listen to others
with care and grace,
and receive whatever wisdom they offer.
Amen.

Evening Prayer (week of Sunday, December 26):

Loving God, you know every struggle
I have faced this day:
let me sleep in peace,
confident in your great love
in Jesus Christ. Amen.



CHANGING WORSHIP COLORS

In our life together as church, we know what time it is by the colors used in our worship services.

During Advent—the first season of the new church year—either blue or purple is used. During the seasons of Christmas and Easter and other festival days, either white or gold becomes the primary color. During Lent, the penitent color of purple is used. On the Day of Pentecost, the color red reminds us of the Holy Spirit’s presence as tongues of fire. And throughout Ordinary Time, green is used to remind us that we are always growing as followers of Jesus Christ.

Thank you to the Memorials Committee and to Sharon Williams for their ongoing ministries to help ensure that we always know what time of year it is as we worship.



DECEMBER LOOSE OFFERING

All this month, loose change offerings will support our mission partners serving in Guatemala. Jingle all the way to the offering plate to make a joyful noise for Guatemala as they seek to empower and encourage women community leaders.

You can also support this mission by either mailing in an offering, or donating electronically at www.umcb.org/donate using the “other” box and marking it “loose change offering”.

SHARING GOD’S LOVE



ECUMENICAL YOUTH GROUP HOLIDAY PARTY

DECEMBER 12, 5-6:30 PM, WESLEY HALL

Join us December 12 at 5 PM for some holiday fun! This time we’ll meet up in the youth room on the third floor. Bring a “white elephant” gift and a friend!

Questions? Contact **Pastor Carrie** at cantczak@umcb.org or 440-234-3525 x105.

We had an eerily good time carving pumpkins in October. See the picture below for our handywork.



NO CHILDREN’S OR YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL DECEMBER 26 OR JANUARY 2.

We encourage families to spend extra time together during these weeks!
We’ll see you on January 9, 2022!

TEACHING & LEARNING . . .



READ & GROW BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP
MONDAY, DECEMBER 13, 6:30-8 PM, FELLOWSHIP HALL

The Read and Grow book discussion group meets in Fellowship Hall from 6:30-8:00 PM on the second Monday of the month.

DECEMBER 13

The Orphan's Tale by Pam Jenoff

JANUARY 10

Mrs. Lincoln's Dressmaker by Jennifer Chiaverini

If anyone has questions, please contact either **Betsy Meikle** at 440-243-5767 or **Janet Mallarnee** at 440-235-7331.

TEACHING & LEARNING TOGETHER



Griefshare Support Group



GRIEFSHARE SUPPORT GROUP
BEGINNING TUESDAY, JANUARY 4, 2022
6:30 PM, VIA ZOOM

We will be starting up a new session in January. It is a thirteen week session filled with some reading, some questions, some laughter, and a few tears - all in the comfort of your home. Come meet some new friends who share the same concerns and thoughts as you might have. We will talk about feelings, about doubts, and about problems getting back to a new normal way of life.

For more information and Zoom details, contact **Mary Lynn Swartz** at marylynn482@gmail.com or 440-409-5931.

THURSDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY

THURSDAYS, 6:30 PM, VIA ZOOM

This month we will continue and complete our study of the women of the Bible. We are currently deciding what we will study next. Please join us.

We look forward to seeing you on Zoom on Thursday nights as we find out more interesting facts about women of the Old Testament.

For more information and Zoom details, contact **Mary Lynn Swartz** at marylynn482@gmail.com or 440-409-5931



JOIN OUR
STUDY



GIVING TREE

RETURN UNWRAPPED GIFTS AND
GIFT CARDS BY DECEMBER 12

The Giving Tree in the Narthex contains items from the children's wish lists that we obtained from Berea Community Outreach. If you decide to "adopt" a child and bring in a gift, please do not wrap it. Put it in a bag with the bell taped on the outside. You may donate wrapping paper and a card, if you wish. If you get a gift card, place it in an envelope with the bell taped on it, and put it in the finance director's mail slot on her door. All gifts and gift cards must be returned by December 12. Thank you so much for participating in this ministry!



EQUAL EXCHANGE OFFERED TWO SUNDAYS IN DECEMBER

SUNDAYS, DECEMBER 5 & 19
10-11 AM, BY THE PARLOR

Try a new Equal Exchange product - Dairy free milk chocolate.

We are now offering a new product - milk chocolate made with coconut (vs. cow's) milk! Stop by on the first or third Sunday of December to inquire and purchase some for a Christmas gift . . . or one for yourself! Of course, we will also have our other chocolate bars and minis, hot cocoa, tea and coffee available for purchase.

Learn more about Equal Exchange at equalexchange.coop and thank you for helping others by purchasing fairly traded, organically grown products. May you each have a blessed Christmas and peace in the new year.

Submitted by Wendy Jelinek, Church and Society

SUPPORT OUR LOCAL FOOD PANTRIES

DONATIONS CAN BE LEFT IN THE CUPBOARD BETWEEN THE NARTHEX AND THE LIBRARY

Over the past year, food insecurity has been on the rise. As the holidays approach, please consider making a donation to support our local food pantries. Especially appreciated at this time of year are non-perishable to make holiday meals. For example, stuffing, instant mashed potatoes, gravy mixes, green beans, mushroom soup, dried onions, pie crust mix, canned pumpkin (spices already added, please), and cranberry sauce.

Please place donations of non-perishable food in the cupboard between the Sanctuary and the library anytime you are in the building. (If you need help finding the right location, talk to one of the pastors or other staff.) If you prefer, please feel free to participate with a monetary donation instead, either by mailing a check to the church office or online at www.umcb.org/donate. Please note "food pantry" on the description line.

Thank you for supporting this effort.



DECEMBER 19
4-6 PM, WESLEY HALL

A Very Merry Messy Christmas to you on December 19 from 4-6 PM as we play out the nativity story in different creative ways, find ourselves in the story of God's love, and celebrate together!

Come join us and bring a friend to this fun celebration!

Questions or want to volunteer?
Contact **Pastor Carrie** at
cantczak@umcb.org or
440-234-3525 x105.



CHANGE
THE
WORLD
FAIR



JANUARY 16, 3-5:30 PM

Are you a part of a ministry or program that seeks to transform the world? This is a great opportunity to share about the project that makes your heart sing! Looking for new ways to serve in our world? This is your opportunity to come learn more about fantastic programs already happening that need your gifts! Contact Pastor Carrie to reserve a table to present your program. Also let her know of someone who think should be there!

Change the World Fair will overlap with Messy Church (Opening at 4 PM as usual) which will also be celebrating different ways to change the world with kindness! All are invited to migrate between the two events. Worship in the Sanctuary will begin at 5 PM, followed by dinner in Fellowship Hall.

E-BITS -

RECYCLING BOXES IS EASY & SAVES TREES, RECYCLING WRAPPING PAPER

As we start to receive, perhaps, more packages this holiday season, please keep in mind that "shipping boxes recycle easily because cardboard is clean, they are easy to reprocess, and every ton that is reclaimed **saves 17 trees.**" Just remember to break them down/flatten them so it takes up less room in the recycling truck or recycling bins that are at schools or churches.

(Source: <https://umcreationjustice.org/november-2021-creation-justice-tips/>)

Also, remember that you can recycle used wrapping paper *unless* it is foil, metallic or is heavily laminated or has metallic flakes or glitter. Please remove sticky labels or lots of tape on the paper that you want to recycle.

(Source: <https://www.treehugger.com/is-wrapping-paper-recyclable-5075370>)

Tissue paper is not recyclable. *Alternatives* to wrapping paper are fabric, old maps or newspaper, other paper and baskets - get creative!

Have a bright, merry and "green" Christmas!
Wendy Jelinek for Church & Society



REMEMBER OR HONOR A LOVED ONE BY HELPING OTHERS

The Magi came bearing gifts, and began the tradition of gift-giving to celebrate the birth of Christ. We join them this year, offering our gifts to support our community.

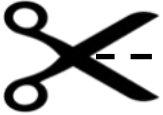
In lieu of poinsettias this year, we invite you to make a financial gift to support three of our mission partners - OhioGuidestone, Grindstone Elementary Emergency Fund, and Nehemiah Mission of Cleveland. While we will have some poinsettias for our Christmas services, we will also have a tree decorated with ornaments, in honor or memory of your loved ones or families. Make any size donation and an ornament will be put on our tree with the name your request.

Donations may be mailed to the church, marking "Magi" in the other box.

You can also make your donation and complete the form online at www.umcb.org/donate.

Forms and donations must be returned /submitted online by **December 15**.

A full list of those remembered or honored will be included in the Christmas Eve bulletin as well as the January Caller.



ORNAMENT FORM

Your Name: _____

(as you wanted printed on the listing)

Your Phone: _____

(in case we have questions)

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

DONATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED IN THE CHURCH OFFICE BY DECEMBER 15, 2021.

The Caller

The United Methodist Church of Berea
170 Seminary Street
Berea, OH 44017
www.umcb.org

**NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



DATED MATERIAL - DO NOT DELAY

NOTE: If you wish to discontinue receiving this newsletter, please contact the church office (440-234-3525 or info@umcb.org) to remove your name from the mailing list.

Our Mission

Our mission is to make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

We live into our mission by:

